3: Will and Spinden E-5 (1905) 1906
NQ17 Mandan NQ17

The sixth group was that of the "Black-tail Deer" and consisted of men over fifty years of age. There were two women in this band who served food and distributed fresh water during the dances. The men wore a crown of bears' claws.

There were a few other dances which were bought and sold, but which hardly deserve a place in the regular system. One of these was the dance of the "Half Shaven Head Band" which the lowest band could buy before reaching the proper age to buy into the "Soldier Band." Another was the "Old Dog Dance." The "Dog Band" could buy this of the "Buffalo Band" before becoming Buffalos themselves or being able to. The "Hot Dance" was danced at Rouhptare by the youngest band, and also at the Hidatsa village where it was purchased from the Arikara. The dancers danced barefoot over live coals and plunged their hands into boiling water.

The women, too, were divided into bands. There were four of these of which the first was "The Band of the Gun" which consisted of the younger girls. Next was the "River Band." The third band was the "Hay Women" who sang only the scalp dance. The fourth and last band was that of the "Women of the White Cow," most of them were old, and they were all tattooed with black lines from the mouth to the base of the chin.

The marriage customs of the Mandan Indians differed little from those of their neighbors. Polygamy was common, although a large part of the men had but one wife. Descent was probably along the male line, though there may have been remains of an older custom of descent along the female line, for all the horses captured by a young man belonged to his sister. The women worked hard and were sometimes badly treated though not as a general rule. Lewis and Clarke says that infidelity was punishable by death. Maximilian says it was punishable by cutting off the woman's nose. When a man's wife was stolen he had a right to demand a horse from the abductor. Separations occurred among them quite frequently. Virtue among the women was held in high esteem but was rather scarce. There are accounts of a celebration where prizes were given to the virtuous maids — these celebrations also took place

304 785 They have another custom of putting their courage and contempt of pain to task by tormenting their flesh in a most atrocious manner. This is done by pinching up a fold of the skin and flesh an inch broad, under which they pass the iron barb of an arrow; they raise stripes in this manner from the back of the hand to the shoulder, and thence to the breast, there joining three or four separate circles of incisions made in the same manner on the lower part of the breast. Some content themselves by raising stripes of different lengths upon their arms and thighs, and forming crescentic cuts on the breast in a very regular manner, one within the other; some with the horns upward, others downward, according to fancy.

304 Most of the women have their faces tattooed in a very savage manner, lines a quarter inch broad passing from the nose to the ear, and down each side of the mouth and chin to the throat. This disfigures them very much; otherwise, some would have tolerably 304 good faces. Some tattooing is done to beautify the face, but at ● 684 other times it is the disfiguring mark of a fit of jealousy in the husband. [366] When a Mandane's handsome young wife is too lavish of her favors without his consent, he tattoes her face as a punish- [576] ment. Although it cannot be said that these people are much given 837 to jealousy, still it is absolutely necessary for a woman to have the consent of her husband to cohabit with a stranger, whether he is white or one of their own people. But I observed during my stay that this consent is not so very necessary in regard to the inhabitants of the same village, as every morning early there were examples to be seen in their plantations of their loose way of living. Many [164] of our servants who frequent these parts to trade in the winter, and who have too intimate connections with the fair sex, are attacked by a painful and loathsome disorder, which commonly appears in the groin, where it forms abscesses and, if neglected, will soon prove dangerous.

574 [401] At three o'clock we were all safely lodged in Black Cat's 609 hut, whom we found as usual very civil and complaisant, although he plainly saw we had nothing to pay him for his trouble. This man is one of the best Indians we met on the Missourie. We found [432] what articles we had left in his charge all in good order, and carefully hung up to keep them from the mice. He even gave me his best horse upon credit; payment to be sent this fall by any opportunity. This was considered an extraordinary circumstance for a Mandane. He gave us several instances of his good nature and generosity while we were packing; every assistance in his power he gave us, without

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